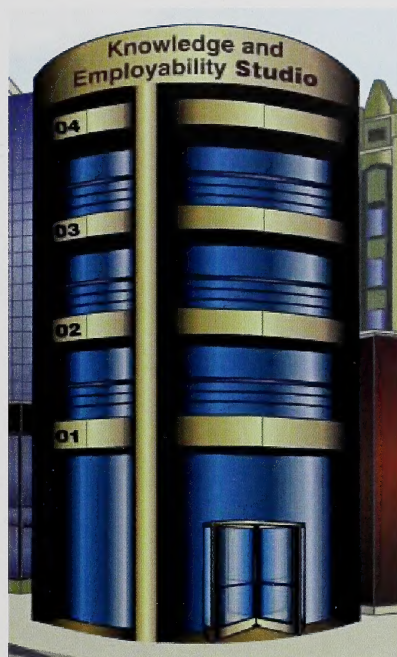


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Information Manual **for** **Knowledge and Employability Courses**



Grades 8–12

Revised 2008

INFORMATION MANUAL

FOR

KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY

COURSES

Grades 8–12

Revised 2008

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This manual is also available on the Alberta Education Web site:

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/know/programs.aspx>

This manual applies to:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Parents	✓
Counsellors	✓
General Public	

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: What is the purpose of this manual?

Purpose.....	1
Guiding beliefs	1

Chapter 2: What are Knowledge and Employability courses and who are they for?

Philosophy and overview	3
Knowledge and Employability courses	3
Characteristics of Knowledge and Employability courses	4
Criteria for student enrollment.....	4
Knowledge and Employability courses and students with special education needs	5

Chapter 3: How can Knowledge and Employability policy and courses be implemented?

Planning for implementation.....	7
Alberta Education support.....	8
Responsibilities of school authorities and school administrators	9
Procedures for enrolling students	10
Assessment for enrollment.....	10
Informed annual written consent	10
Student learning plans	10
Organizing for instruction	11
Junior high school	11
Senior high school	11
Provincial achievement tests.....	11
Practical applications	12
Off-campus experiences	13
Articulation	13
Alignment with other courses	13
Transitions to other courses	14

Chapter 4: How can Knowledge and Employability implementation be monitored and revised?

The school administrator's role	15
Building a community of practice	16
Monitoring students' growth	16
Collecting data	16
Monitoring and revising the implementation plan	16
Indicators of successful implementation	17

References	19
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Appendices

Appendix A	Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy 1.4.2	21
Appendix B	Requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement	23
Appendix C	Sample Knowledge and Employability Student Learning Plan Template	25
Appendix D	Knowledge and Employability Occupational Component Courses	29
Appendix E	Examples of Junior High School Implementation Strategies	33
Appendix F	Examples of Senior High School Schedules	35
Appendix G	Placement of Students in Knowledge and Employability Courses	41
Appendix H	Background	43

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Chapter 1: What is the purpose of this manual?

Knowledge and Employability policy and courses replaced the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) policy and courses. Use of Knowledge and Employability courses policy, programs of study and provincial achievement tests were mandatory in September 2006.

In this chapter:

- Purpose of the *Information Manual for Knowledge and Employability Courses, Grades 8–12*
- Guiding beliefs

Purpose

This manual is for district and school administrators, counsellors, teachers, parents/guardians, students and others involved in the process of implementing the Knowledge and Employability policy and courses. It is intended to serve as a starting point as districts and schools introduce the new courses or make the transition from IOP to Knowledge and Employability courses.

This manual provides a general overview of the Knowledge and Employability policy and courses and suggests practical strategies that may be useful as staff work with students, parents/guardians and community members/organizations. It is important to consult additional resources for more detailed information, such as school authority policies and practices relating to the implementation of new policy and programs of study.

Guiding beliefs

The following beliefs guided the development of this manual.

- Enrollment in one or more Knowledge and Employability courses is determined individually on a course-by-course basis and is based on each student's secondary, continuing education and training and career goals, and how those goals relate to the philosophy, rationale and intent of Knowledge and Employability courses.
- Enrollment in one or more Knowledge and Employability courses encourages students to be successful, engaged learners.
- Decisions about enrollment in Knowledge and Employability courses are based on assessment information that identifies each student's achievement on a variety of measures that is gathered over time and recorded in the student's records.
- Decisions about enrollment in Knowledge and Employability courses, based on consultation with parents/guardians and the student, will include informed yearly written consent of parents/guardians (if the student is under 16 years of age) and the student. They will also include the creation of a learning plan for each student that lists the student's goals and records and tracks courses needed to achieve those goals.
- Schools and school authorities should make Knowledge and Employability courses available as needed by each student and should organize for instruction based on the best interests of the learner.

Chapter 2: What are Knowledge and Employability courses and who are they for?

In this chapter:

- Philosophy and overview
- Knowledge and Employability courses
- Characteristics of Knowledge and Employability courses
- Criteria for student enrollment
- Knowledge and Employability courses and students with special education needs

Philosophy and overview

Knowledge and Employability courses are available to students in grades 8 through 12 who meet specific criteria (see the “Criteria for student enrollment” section and Appendix A, Section 4). The courses are intended to provide students with opportunities to experience success and become well prepared for employment, further studies, active citizenship and lifelong learning. Knowledge and Employability courses include and promote:

- workplace standards for academic, occupational and employability skills
- practical applications through on- and off-campus experiences and/or community partnerships
- career development skills for exploring careers, assessing career skills and developing a career-focused portfolio
- interpersonal skills to ensure respect, support and cooperation with others at home, in the community and at the workplace.

Knowledge and Employability courses are designed to provide entry-level employment skills for students who have expressed a goal of leaving school before earning the requirements for a senior high school diploma. Some students may transition successfully from Knowledge and Employability courses to other courses to achieve a senior high school diploma or to continuing education and training opportunities; e.g., some colleges, some apprenticeship programs. Reviewing each students’ learning plans on an annual basis and adjusting their goals and courses as needed are important parts of the process.

Knowledge and Employability courses

Programs of study are available for the following courses:

- Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts 8–9 and 10–4, 20–4, 30–4
 - Knowledge and Employability Mathematics 8–9 and 10–4, 20–4
 - Knowledge and Employability Science 8–9 and 10–4, 20–4
 - Knowledge and Employability Social Studies 8–9 and 10–4, 20–4
 - Knowledge and Employability Occupations 8–9 and 10–4, 20–4, 30–4.
- (See Appendix D for a complete list of the occupational courses and the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* for a list of courses and course codes.)

Knowledge and Employability policy and programs of study for courses are linked to the Knowledge and Employability page on the Alberta Education Web site at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/know/programs.aspx>.

Characteristics of Knowledge and Employability courses

Characteristics of Knowledge and Employability courses are as follows.

- Each student will have opportunities to:
 - take courses at his or her highest level of achievement
 - select courses to meet individual learning needs and secondary, continuing education and training and career goals
 - transition from Knowledge and Employability courses to other courses
 - remain in his or her neighbourhood and/or local schools
 - earn a Certificate of High School Achievement or, as appropriate, an Alberta High School Diploma.
- Students will be enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses only when they meet the required criteria (see Appendix A, Section 4).
- Schools have the capacity and flexibility to meet the learning needs of each student through individual Knowledge and Employability courses rather than a full Integrated Occupational Program.
- Time and credit allocations for Knowledge and Employability courses are consistent with other courses; i.e., 5 credits, 125 hours of instruction.
- Grade 9 students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses will be required to write Knowledge and Employability Provincial Achievement Tests.
- Students, their parents/guardians and teachers will be actively involved in developing, updating and monitoring each student's learning plan.

Criteria for student enrollment

Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy, Section 4 (see Appendix A) provides criteria for identifying students for enrollment in Knowledge and Employability courses. Additional guidelines for student enrollment can be found in Appendix G.

Knowledge and Employability courses are designed for students with specific needs and goals, including students who:

- have demonstrated and/or expressed a desire to enter the workplace after completing a Certificate of High School Achievement rather than achieving a senior high school diploma
- have expressed goals that include succeeding in school to become better prepared for the workplace
- achieve success through experiential learning activities that:
 - focus on reading, writing and mathematical literacy and essential employability skills in occupational contexts
 - provide practical applications and connections to the home, community and workplace.

Knowledge and Employability courses and students with special education needs

Knowledge and Employability courses are not designed for students with special education needs but may be an appropriate placement if their needs can be met within these courses. To assist in distinguishing between students appropriately selected for Knowledge and Employability courses and students with special education needs, refer to Appendix A, Section 4(d), Appendix G and *Standards for Special Education*, Amended June 2004; in particular, the requirements related to identification, referral, assessment and specialized assessment. Special education refers to the education of students with mild, moderate or severe disabilities and/or those who are gifted and talented.

Students who do not meet the enrollment criteria for Knowledge and Employability courses may be better served by registering in courses that are more closely aligned with their specific learning needs.

Chapter 3: How can Knowledge and Employability policy and courses be implemented?

In this chapter:

- Planning for implementation
 - preparing students, parents/guardians and staff for change
 - supporting implementation
 - organizing for instruction and scheduling
 - making connections with the community
- Alberta Education support
- Responsibilities of school authorities and school administrators
- Procedures for enrolling students
- Organizing for instruction
- Provincial Achievement Tests
- Practical applications
- Off-campus experiences
- Articulation
- Alignment with other courses
- Transitions to other courses

Implementing new courses may create minimal or significant changes within a district or school. Changes may involve staffing, instructional organization, classroom size and locations, allocation of human and other resources, professional development activities and staff and student scheduling.

Schools that do not currently have an Integrated Occupational Program may implement the Knowledge and Employability policy and courses in a similar fashion to the introduction of new curriculum in any area of study. Students, parents/guardians and staff generally view the introduction of new courses positively and welcome new options for meeting the diverse learning needs of students.

Schools making the transition from the Integrated Occupational Program to Knowledge and Employability courses may require additional procedures and time to develop a clear understanding of the new policy and direction before embarking on the implementation and to make the transition from what was to what is.

Planning for implementation

There is no right or wrong way to make the transition from IOP to Knowledge and Employability courses or to implement Knowledge and Employability courses for the first time. The right way is the strategy that generates the most success for students within each district and school. Those involved in making decisions will draw upon the knowledge base and experiences within the district, school and community to customize an implementation strategy that will work for each unique learning community.

A thoughtful and well-developed plan gives school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders the confidence to begin the implementation process for Knowledge and Employability courses. Comprehensive planning helps to reduce the number of problems or issues that may arise and their potential negative impact.

Successful implementation involves reducing anxiety and enhancing support for new courses by involving staff, parents/guardians, students and representatives from community groups in developing the implementation plan. Planning should include:

- sharing the policy, philosophy and goals of the new courses
- providing a logical explanation and rationale highlighting the need for, and benefits of, the change
- timely in-service and other professional development activities
- openly acknowledging and discussing possible challenges that may be encountered
- anticipating the future and responding quickly to problems or issues
- opportunities for ongoing communication with staff and other stakeholders throughout the implementation process
- monitoring and adjusting implementation strategies when necessary.

The perceived loss of a course or program may inhibit acceptance of change. Time spent discussing the benefits of the new direction with staff members, parents/guardians and students will enhance acceptance and commitment. For example, remind those concerned that change from a program with limited choices to individual courses:

- gives students the opportunity to take individual courses appropriate to their ability levels in each subject that are consistent with their school and career goals
- provides increased opportunities for students to transition to other courses and pursue a senior high school diploma
- provides schools with more flexibility in programming to better meet the needs of individual learners.

Implementation planning should include opportunities for all stakeholders and stakeholder groups to provide input, share concerns and have their questions answered.

Alberta Education support

Alberta Education is committed to providing support to school authorities, administrators, teachers, students and parents/guardians. The following documents supporting Knowledge and Employability implementation are available on the Alberta Education Web site at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/known.aspx>:

- *Information Manual for Knowledge and Employability Courses, Grades 8–12*
- Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy 1.4.2
- Knowledge and Employability programs of study
- Knowledge and Employability Implementation Tool
- Knowledge and Employability Studio (Online Guide to Implementation)
- *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents and Curriculum Summaries*
- *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12*
<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/guide.asp>

Alberta Education has authorized learning and teaching resources that are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre. The *Knowledge and Employability Grades 8–12 Alberta Authorized Resource List and Annotated Bibliography* is available on the Alberta Education Web site at

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/know/resources/kelist.aspx>.

Check the Authorized Resources Database for the most current listing of resources at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/apps/lrdb/default.asp>.

Decisions about distribution of funds are made at the district level. Alberta Education provides 8/5 credit enrollment unit (CEU) funding for Knowledge and Employability senior high school courses.

Responsibilities of school authorities and school administrators

Ultimately, implementation is the responsibility of the school authority. However, implementing new policy and courses requires a team effort between the school authority, school administrators and staff, students, parents/guardians and members of the community.

School authorities and school administrators are responsible for ensuring that:

- courses are provided that encourage and support students' achievement at their highest ability levels and that support students' goals
- qualified staff are in place to provide instruction and support
- human, print, technology, funding and other resources are appropriately allocated to support teaching and learning
- staff have timely opportunities to take part in related professional development activities.

The school is responsible for creating and nurturing an environment that supports student achievement. It is important that students and their parents/guardians have confidence in the school's ability to:

- identify individual student learning needs
- work with individual students and their parents/guardians to develop achievable learning and career goals and to create a learning plan for each student
- provide programming through a selection of appropriate courses and learning experiences
- monitor and assist students to reach their highest level of academic achievement and maximize their practical learning experiences
- form partnerships within the community to provide practical learning experiences in authentic settings
- follow provincial and school authority policies, regulations and guidelines regarding the implementation of new curriculum
- monitor, assess and adjust the implementation plan on an ongoing basis.

See the resources *Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta* and *The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools* for further information.

Procedures for enrolling students	<p>The main advantage of Knowledge and Employability courses is the flexibility they provide to students and schools in planning and selecting appropriate coursework, while providing practical work-related experiences. Knowledge and Employability courses policy identifies procedures for student enrollment that include assessment, informed annual written consent and a learning plan (see Appendix A, Sections 2 and 3).</p>
<i>Assessment for enrollment</i>	<p>The decision to enroll students in one or more Knowledge and Employability courses is a collaborative process involving assessment and identification. Educational assessment is an ongoing process that integrates information from several sources, such as testing, observation, interviews, work samples and analysis of academic achievement.</p> <p>Assessment results recorded over time will assist in determining the student's strengths, needs and abilities to ensure enrollment in courses appropriate to the student's highest level of achievement.</p> <p>Students under consideration for enrollment in Knowledge and Employability courses should be identified using Level A or B assessment information that indicates they meet the criteria included in policy (see Appendix A, Section 4).</p>
<i>Informed annual written consent</i>	<p>Informed consent means that parents/guardians and students are fully aware that Knowledge and Employability courses have reduced academic expectations and a greater emphasis on occupational exploration and preparation.</p> <p>Informed annual written consent of parents/guardians (if the student is under 16 years of age) and the student ensures that they are in support of continued registration in a Knowledge and Employability course.</p>
<i>Student learning plans</i>	<p>Schools have the responsibility of collaborating with each student and his or her parents/guardians to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and implement a written learning plan to identify secondary, continuing education and training opportunities and career goals • plan, record and track the courses needed and completed to achieve the student's goals • monitor, assess and adjust the effectiveness of the learning plan on a regular basis. <p>See Appendix C for a sample learning plan template.</p> <p>Decisions about courses will also involve challenging students at their highest ability levels and preparing them for achieving the requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement or an Alberta High School Diploma.</p> <p>The plan may include a section for student and parent/guardian signatures. Each plan should be reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis as needed.</p>

Learning plans are important at both the junior high and senior high school levels; however, because junior high school students enroll in a grade (Grade 8 or Grade 9) rather than individual courses, the learning plan assists in identifying which course(s) the student is taking, the subject(s), which courses/subjects have been completed and their marks.

Organizing for instruction

Decisions about organizing for instruction are made by the school authority in collaboration with school administrators and are based on a variety of factors, such as provincial policy, numbers of students, parent input, transportation, distances and community support.

The key factor is implementing a strategy that generates the most success for students within each school and community. Implementation models may include:

- segregated schools or classrooms within a district or school
- infusion of Knowledge and Employability students in classrooms with mainstream students (combined classrooms)
- a combination of segregated and infusion models.

Decisions about how each school organizes staff, students, resources and facilities for instruction are made at the jurisdiction and school level.

Junior high school

Time allocations for Knowledge and Employability junior high school courses are the same as time allocations for other courses and, therefore, should be scheduled in the same manner as other junior high school courses.

The various Knowledge and Employability courses provide opportunities for schools to be flexible as they implement the courses. Enrollment of students in one or more Knowledge and Employability courses is based on meeting the needs of the learner in each subject (see Appendix E for examples of implementation strategies at the junior high school level). Although students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses are identified using the code 710, this code does not distinguish the courses in which they are enrolled. Each student's learning plan will identify and track a student's coursework.

Senior high school

Senior high school Knowledge and Employability courses are 5-credit courses and should be scheduled on the same basis as other courses; i.e., 1 credit for each 25 hours of instruction. Course codes for Knowledge and Employability senior high school courses are listed in the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12*.

See Appendix F for examples of senior high school schedules.

Provincial achievement tests

Four new Knowledge and Employability achievement tests that reflect the Grade 9 outcomes for English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies are being developed. To be eligible to write a Knowledge and Employability test, in place of a regular Grade 9 achievement test, a student must have been enrolled in, and received instruction from the Grade 9

program of studies for that course, as per Policy 1.4.2 (See Appendix A and Appendix G). Further information about Knowledge and Employability achievement testing is available in the *General Information Bulletin* and *Subject Bulletins* at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/achievement.aspx>.

Practical applications

Practical applications are included in all Knowledge and Employability courses and may take place on- and off-campus. Practical applications enhance the relevance of schoolwork to everyday living at home, in the community and in the workplace.

Schools will implement Knowledge and Employability occupational courses in a similar manner as CTS courses. Additional equipment, facilities and/or resources are not necessarily required.

Practical applications may include a variety of community partnership activities, such as:

- hosting a career day at the school and inviting community employees/employers to present and share information
- organizing a science fair with the assistance of parents/parent groups
- interviewing members of the business community as an activity in the language arts or health programs
- taking part in community celebrations and special events as a social studies activity
- visiting a local business as a whole-class activity
- individual students job shadowing in a local workplace
- work experiences through Knowledge and Employability Occupational and Workplace Readiness/Practicum courses; Work Experience 15, 25 or 35; Green Certificate placements and/or Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) courses (senior high school level).

Note: Off-campus activities and/or courses will follow the guidelines outlined in the *Off-campus Education Policy* and the *Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers*.

Business and the community have a right to expect that students have the necessary knowledge and skills to become contributing members of society and lifelong learners. Business and the community share a responsibility to assist the school in providing opportunities for students to develop and apply knowledge and employability skills in workplace settings. Practical work site experiences help to reinforce the learning that occurs within the classroom and provide work experiences and community contacts for possible future employment.

When the student's learning plan includes off-campus experiences, business and the community become important parts of his or her learning experiences. For many businesses, this may be their first opportunity to participate in an off-site educational experience with students and staff. Dialogue and planning are essential for successful work-related community experiences.

Off-campus experiences

Off-campus experiences for students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses must follow the guidelines outlined in the *Off-campus Education Policy* and *Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers*. The *Off-campus Education Guide* provides information about approving work sites, contacting potential community partners, informing parents/guardians and setting up tasks, assessment criteria and supervision schedules.

Prior to student placement in off-campus employment experiences, the following activities should be completed.

- Off-campus work sites will be approved by the superintendent or designate.
- The student's work schedule will be developed and approved.
- Workplace tasks and criteria for assessment will be identified.
- Workplace and school supervisors will be identified.
- A supervision schedule will be determined.

Articulation

Course articulation between junior and senior high schools, and within schools in a district, can be successfully achieved through dialogue and collaborative planning. The potential for student success is increased when there is a smooth transition from junior high to senior high school or from one course level to the next.

Districts adopt a variety of strategies to prepare students and parents/guardians for transitions from Grade 9 to senior high school and from course to course, including:

- providing opportunities for students to explore career opportunities and their personal strengths and abilities, often in the Health and Life Skills or English language arts courses
- having Grade 9 students visit local senior high schools
- hosting student and parent/guardian evening sessions in which representatives of senior high school(s) provide information
- using the authorized Knowledge and Employability resources and the Knowledge and Employability Studio (Online Guide to Implementation) at the appropriate designated grade levels.

Alignment with other courses

Knowledge and Employability courses reflect the ability levels of students, focus on employability and essential skills, and make connections to everyday practical home, community and workplace applications.

Knowledge and Employability courses also align with other courses to:

- accommodate students who transition to other courses and work toward achieving a senior high school diploma
- accommodate a variety of classroom settings, including combined classrooms.

The alignment between Knowledge and Employability programs of study and other courses is described below.

- Knowledge and Employability English language arts outcomes are organized into the five **General Outcomes** of the K–12 English language arts program.

- Knowledge and Employability mathematics outcomes are organized into the four **Strands** of the K–12 mathematics program.
- Knowledge and Employability science knowledge outcomes align with the **Units of Study** in Science 8, 9, 14 and 24.
- Knowledge and Employability social studies outcomes align with the **General Outcomes** in Social Studies 8, 9, 10-2 (draft) and 20-2 (draft).
- Knowledge and Employability occupational courses align with some of the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses. See the Knowledge and Employability – CTS Connections document.

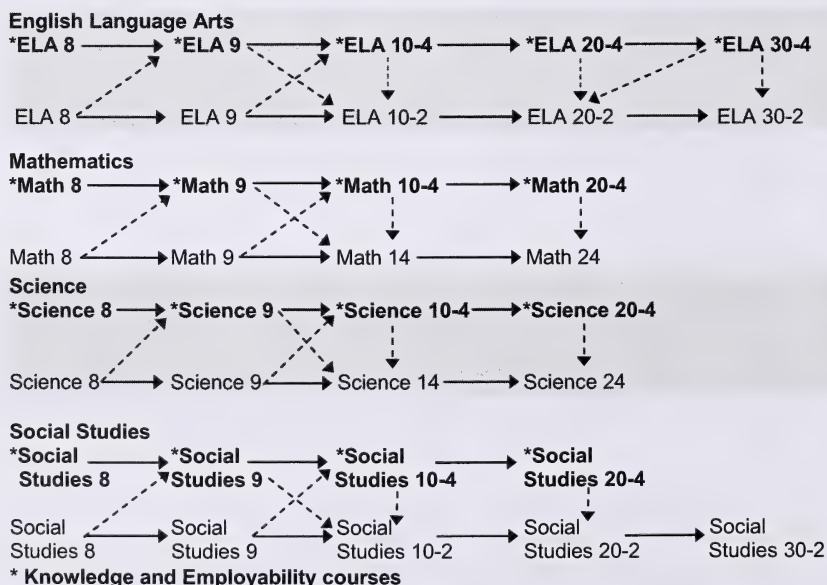
Transitions to other courses

When selecting Knowledge and Employability courses, it is critical that teachers, students and parents/guardians are well aware of the flexibility and transition points. Strong course articulation ensures that students have every opportunity to acquire a Certificate of High School Achievement or to transition to other courses to achieve an Alberta High School Diploma.

Transitions from Knowledge and Employability courses will be made through consultation with the student, parents/guardians, teachers and others as appropriate and on an individual student and course-by-course basis, based on the:

- procedures and criteria outlined in policy
- needs, goals and achievement of each student.

Recommended transition points from Knowledge and Employability courses to other courses are identified below, in the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* and the sample learning plan template (see Appendix C).



Knowledge and Employability Occupational courses align with some Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses (see Appendix E).

Chapter 4: How can Knowledge and Employability implementation be monitored and revised?

In this chapter:

- The school administrator's role
- Building a community of practice
- Monitoring student's growth
- Collecting data
- Monitoring and revising the implementation plan
- Indicators of successful implementation

Key components of improving student achievement and meeting individual student needs and goals include the alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment and reporting progress to students and their parents/guardians. Communicating expectations and reporting student progress enhance the learning partnership between the school and home and increase the potential for student success. Parents/guardians will develop a better understanding of how to monitor and support their children's learning and increase their confidence in school.

Reviewing and adjusting the implementation plan through consultation with staff and community members, students and parents/guardians throughout the implementation process will ensure stakeholder needs are being met.

The school administrator's role

The goal of supervising and monitoring instruction is twofold:

- 1) to ensure that students have the best academic and practical opportunities available to reach their maximum potential so they can become contributing members of society
- 2) to celebrate the achievements of the school, teachers, students, parents/guardians and the community as they work together to create a vibrant, challenging and supportive learning environment.

In monitoring instruction, the principal may involve other staff members, such as assistant principals, department heads, lead teachers and school counsellors. Monitoring instruction will help ensure that:

- students are enrolled in courses that are appropriate for their goals and ability levels and that course outcomes are being taught
- resources are appropriately allocated to support the range of courses and are used to enhance student achievement
- students are enrolled in courses that will lead to the attainment of a Certificate of High School Achievement or an Alberta High School Diploma
- students receive adequate support for their learning needs.

Building a community of practice

Teachers need to be familiar with the new programs of study and authorized resources to implement curriculum and recommended assessment strategies and teaching practices. When introducing new policy and courses, colleagues can support each other through the sharing of promising practices, in-service training and other professional development activities. Access to consultants, research information and other knowledgeable professionals also enhances the ongoing dialogue within the community of practice.

Monitoring students' growth

Students' growth and achievement should be monitored and measured against their learning plans. It is important to monitor each student's learning plan regularly and to discuss the academic/occupational pathway the student is working on to make sure appropriate classes (at the student's highest level of achievement) are taken. The plan does not compare the growth or achievements of one student to those of another student or the rest of the class.

Collecting data

Sound decision making is based on the collection and analysis of both hard and soft data. The analysis of the hard and soft data may indicate whether the implementation plan is progressing in a positive manner or whether issues are developing that require some intervention or corrective action.

Hard data is information collected from sources; e.g., enrollment and budget documents, provincial achievement tests, reading and psychological assessments and attendance forms. It is usually collected and analyzed at a variety of levels; e.g., within the classroom, the school and the school authority.

Soft data may also be collected at a variety of levels. At the school level, soft data includes informal observations of student behaviour, professional development requests and student, staff and parent/guardian satisfaction.

When the hard and soft data are supportive of, or in alignment with, each other, the information, decisions and actions tend to be reliable.

Monitoring and revising the implementation plan

The implementation plan for new courses is similar to a road map. It identifies the intended destination and landmarks along the way. As with any plan, it serves as a strong guide for the sequence of actions that occur but it must also remain flexible to accommodate the unexpected.

The implementation plan should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Review of the plan may indicate the need to make adjustments based on the circumstances of a particular school or school authority. For example, it may be necessary to hold more than one information evening for students and parents/guardians or schedule more in-service training or interschool visitations than originally planned.

School districts and schools may consider making changes similar to the following.

- Reorganize for instruction to include a broader range of courses to better meet the needs of students.
- Change the physical location of the classroom(s) to accommodate and facilitate the implementation of courses.
- Revise the timetable to accommodate onsite or off-campus learning experiences.
- Reorganize teachers and support staff to align course needs with individual experience, expertise and interest.
- Upgrade or re-allocate resources to support the curriculum expectations of the new courses.
- Expand school–community partnerships to ensure that quality practical learning experiences and opportunities are available to support Knowledge and Employability courses.
- Improve or enhance the school–home partnership by providing meaningful opportunities for parent/guardian involvement.
- Focus on educational opportunities related to the vision, philosophy and rationale of Knowledge and Employability courses for staff, parents/guardians and community members.

All stakeholders should be provided with opportunities to be involved in or respond to proposed adjustments to the implementation plan and process. Changes should respect the ideas and circumstances of each stakeholder.

Regardless of whether or where adjustments may be needed, the starting point is always the same—**what is best for the student**. Every change and adjustment should be based on improving the learning environment and opportunities for the student as an individual and then for students collectively.

Indicators of successful implementation

The measure of a district's or school's success in implementing Knowledge and Employability course(s) may become apparent through:

- parent/guardian and student satisfaction in having access to courses aligned appropriately with the ability levels and goals of the student
- improved attendance rates as confidence grows in students' abilities to achieve school and employment preparation goals
- increased confidence of staff to meet the needs of a broader range of students
- a sense of growing school pride shared among staff, students and their families in the accomplishments of the school
- recognition and acknowledgement from the community
- completion of requirements for the attainment of Certificates of High School Achievement
- the successful transition of students to the workplace.

The successful implementation of Knowledge and Employability policy and courses is one more step school authorities and schools can make toward preparing students for their future roles in society.

REFERENCES

Alberta Education Resources:

About Safe and Caring Schools

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/safeschools.aspx>

Alberta Authorized Resource List and Annotated Bibliography for Knowledge and Employability Courses

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/know/resources/kelist.aspx>

Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/guidetoed.aspx>

The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2005.

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/heart.aspx>

Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy 1.4.2

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/742239/policy.pdf>

Knowledge and Employability Studio

<http://www.learnalberta.ca/content-teacher/kes/index.html?launch=true>

Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/616821/offcampus.pdf>

Off-campus Education Policy

<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/pol-plan/polregs/adobe/1.4.3.pdf>

Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004

<http://education.alberta.ca/departement/policy/k-12manual.aspx>

KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY COURSES POLICY 1.4.2

BACKGROUND

Consultations with education stakeholders from throughout the province indicated support for the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP). Stakeholders acknowledged the effectiveness of IOP courses in serving the needs of students who benefit from a level of courses that make connections between schooling, everyday experiences and future choices. Consultation participants recommended that IOP policy and courses be revised.

In response to provincial consultation, the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) policy was revised to:

- reflect a series of courses to meet the needs of individual students by providing opportunities for students to take a variety of courses, transition to other courses and take courses at the student's highest level
- change credit/time allocations from 3, 5 or 10 credits to 5 credits to increase consistency with other courses
- provide additional criteria for enrolling students
- change the name from Integrated Occupational Program to Knowledge and Employability courses.

In addition to revising policy, programs of study were revised, new resources were authorized and new Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests were developed.

POLICY

School authorities may offer Knowledge and Employability courses in order to provide students who meet the criteria with opportunities to experience success and become well prepared for employment, further studies, citizenship and lifelong learning.

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS

'Assessment' is the ongoing process of collecting information about students using a number of formal and informal methods across a variety of domains relevant to performance (behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning characteristics) to develop and implement appropriate programming to support student learning.

'Practical applications' enhance experiences by connecting in-school learning to the home, community and workplace; facilitate successful transitions from school to the workplace through hands-on, activity-based, on- and off-campus experiences; and may be provided through a variety of community partnerships including mentorship, job shadowing, field trips, guest speakers and Work Experience courses.

POLICY PROCEDURES

School boards and authorities shall:

- 1 develop, keep current and implement written policy and procedures consistent with provincial policy and procedures;

APPENDIX A (continued)

School boards and authorities shall:

- 2 ensure that students are
 - a) enrolled in courses appropriate to their highest level of achievement
 - b) encouraged to achieve
 - i) a Certificate of High School Achievement when they successfully complete 80 credits in an appropriate combination of Knowledge and Employability and other courses, and/or
 - ii) an Alberta High School Diploma where provincial requirements have been met;
- 3 ensure that enrollment of students is in accordance with the processes below:
 - a) is based on past performance in a variety of recorded and documented standardized and classroom assessments
 - b) includes annual written consent of the student and, if student is under the age of 16 years, parents/guardians
 - c) includes consultation with the student, the student's parents/guardians, teachers, counsellors and other staff:
 - i) to inform the student and parents/guardians about the philosophy, goals and nature of the courses
 - ii) to inform the student and parents/guardians about attainable transitions to secondary, post-secondary and workplace opportunities
 - iii) to create a written plan that
 - clearly states the student's goals, and
 - maps and tracks courses needed to achieve those goals;
- 4 ensure that students are identified, assessed and enrolled in accordance with provincial criteria below:
 - a) student is a minimum age of 12 years 6 months
 - b) student's goals:
 - i) include succeeding in school to become better prepared for the workplace and/or other secondary/post-secondary opportunities, and
 - ii) parallel the philosophy, rationale, goals and outcomes of the courses
 - c) student's assessments indicate:
 - i) strengths, needs and abilities will be appropriately addressed and enhanced through enrollment in one or more of the courses
 - ii) achievement of success through learning activities that
 - focus on reading, writing and mathematical literacy in everyday living and occupational contexts, and
 - provide practical applications and connections to the home, community and workplace
 - d) students with some identified special needs may be enrolled in one or more of the courses:
 - i) if the courses are consistent with their individual goals, abilities and needs and are deemed the most appropriate course(s), and
 - ii) if the programming for these students with special needs meets the requirements outlined in the *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004*;
- 5 ensure that when students are involved in off-campus activities through occupational and other courses, the requirements included in the current *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12*, the *Off-campus Education Policy* and the *Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers* are met.

CERTIFICATE OF HIGH SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT REQUIREMENTS^①

The requirements indicated in this chart are the minimum requirements for a student to attain a Certificate of High School Achievement. The requirements for entry into post-secondary institutions and workplaces may require additional and/or specific courses.

80 CREDITS^② including the following:
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 20-2 OR 30-4
MATHEMATICS 14 OR 20-4
SCIENCE 14 OR 20-4
SOCIAL STUDIES 13 OR 10-2 OR 26 OR 20-4
PHYSICAL EDUCATION 10 (3 CREDITS) ^③
CAREER AND LIFE MANAGEMENT (3 CREDITS) ^④
5 CREDITS IN^⑤
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-level Knowledge and Employability occupational course, or • 30-level Career and Technology Studies (CTS), or • 30-level locally developed course with an occupational focus
AND
5 CREDITS IN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-level Knowledge and Employability Workplace Practicum course, or • 30-level Work Experience course^⑥, or • 30-level Green Certificate course^⑦
OR
5 CREDITS IN
30-level Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) course ^⑧

^① Students enrolled in senior high IOP as of January 2006 may choose to complete the requirements for the Certificate of High School Achievement or the Certificate of Achievement (Appendix 5).

^② To qualify for a Certificate of High School Achievement, students must successfully complete a minimum of one academic Knowledge and Employability course.

^③ See information on exemption from the physical education requirement in the Physical Education section of the Guide.

^④ See information on exemption from the CALM requirement in the CALM section of the Guide.

^⑤ To transition to the new Certificate of High School Achievement, 36-level IOP occupational courses may be used in lieu of 30-4-level Knowledge and Employability occupational courses.

^⑥ Refer to the Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers, 2000 for additional information.

^⑦ Refer to the Alberta Education Web site for additional Green Certificate information.

^⑧ Refer to the Registered Apprenticeship Program Information Manual, 2004 for additional information.

SAMPLE

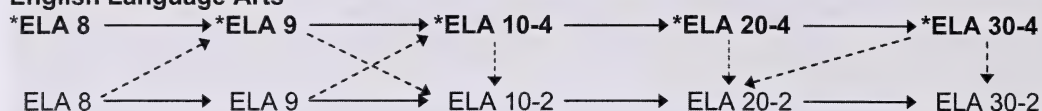
Student's Name: _____

[illegible]

APPENDIX C (continued)

MAP OF COURSES REQUIRED AND COMPLETED

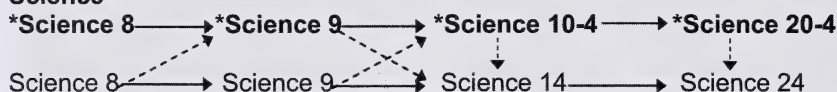
English Language Arts



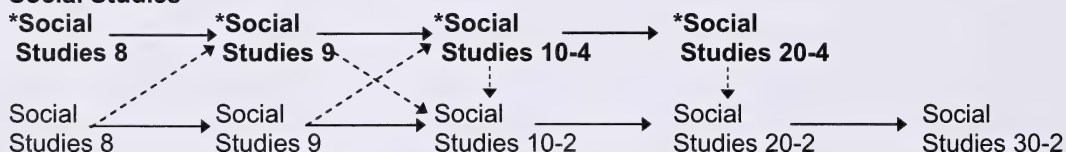
Mathematics



Science



Social Studies



Other Required Courses:	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
• Physical Education					
• Health and Life Skills/CALM					
Complementary Courses:					
• Art					
• Drama					
• Music					
• Languages					
• Religion					
• Other					

* Knowledge and Employability courses

OCCUPATIONAL COMPONENT

Courses	OR Related CTS Courses	Marks				
		8	9	10-4	20-4	30-4
Workplace Readiness						
Business Services						
Fabrics						
Foods						
Horticulture						
Human Care						
Natural Resources						
Auto Mechanics						
Art/Design and Communication						
Construction: Building						
Construction: Metal Fabrication						
Cosmetology						

Shading indicates courses not available at that grade level.

OTHER OCCUPATIONAL-RELATED COURSES

Courses	Grade 10 Mark	Grade 11 Mark	Grade 12 Mark
Work Experience			
Work Experience			
Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)			
Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)			
Green Certificate			
Other			
Other			

APPENDIX C (continued)

COMMENTS					
Year:					
Grade:					
Year:					
Grade:					
Year:					
Grade:					
Year:					
Grade:					
Year:					
Grade:					
Year:					
Grade:					
SIGNATURES	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
_____ Parent/Guardian					
Date:					
_____ Student					
Date:					
_____ Teacher					
Date:					

KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY OCCUPATIONAL COMPONENT COURSES

EXPLORATION		ORIENTATION		
Junior High		Senior High		
Strand	Units of Study – Levels 1 – 2			PREPARATION
Art/Design and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practical Arts• Ceramics• Graphic Arts• Photography• Audio/Video	Art/Design 10-4	Art/Design 20-4	Art/Design 30-4
		Art/Media Communications 10-4	Art/Media Communications 20-4	Art/Media Communications 30-4
Auto Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two-stroke Engine• Four-stroke Engine• Basic Car Care and Maintenance	Auto Mechanics 10-4	Auto Mechanics 20-4	Auto Mechanics 30-4
			Auto Services 20-4	Auto Services 30-4
Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicating with Others• Searching for Information• Representing Information	Business Services 10-4	Logistics 20-4	Logistics 30-4
			Office Services 20-4	Office Services 30-4
			Sales and Service 20-4	Sales and Service 30-4
Construction: Building*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Layout, Design and Drafting• Woods• Metals• Plastics• Electricity	Construction: Building 10-4**	Woodworking and Cabinetry 20-4	Woodworking and Cabinetry 30-4
Construction: Metal Fabrication*		Construction: Metal Fabrication 10-4	Wood Frame Construction 20-4	Wood Frame Construction 30-4
			Construction Systems 20-4	Construction Systems 30-4
Cosmetology	N/A	Cosmetology 10-4	Metal Fabrication 20-4	Metal Fabrication 30-4
			Cosmetology 20-4	Cosmetology 30-4
Fabrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Sewing	Fabrics 10-4	Esthetics 20-4	Esthetics 30-4
			Fashion Textiles 20-4	Fashion Textiles 30-4
Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Cooking• Snacks and Convenience Foods• Basic Baking	Foods 10-4	Industrial Textiles 20-4	Industrial Textiles 30-4
			Commercial Cooking 20-4	Commercial Cooking 30-4
Horticulture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soil Preparation, Plants and Planting• Turf/Grasses• Landscaping	Horticulture 10-4	Food Preparation and Service 20-4	Food Preparation and Service 30-4
			Greenhouse and Nursery 20-4	Greenhouse and Nursery 30-4
Human Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid• Child Care (Noninfants)	Human Care 10-4	Landscaping 20-4	Landscaping and Maintenance 30-4
			Child Care 20-4	Child Care 30-4
Natural Resources	N/A	Natural Resources 10-4	Home Care 20-4	Home Care 30-4
			Agriculture 20-4	Agriculture 30-4
			Forestry 20-4	Forestry 30-4
Workplace Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal and Workplace Safety• Employment Exploration• Acquiring a Job• Keeping a Job	Workplace Readiness 10-4	Oil and Gas 20-4	Oil and Gas 30-4
			Workplace Practicum 20-4	Workplace Practicum 30-4

* These strands have been replaced by the single strand Construction at the junior high school level.

** Students who successfully complete Construction: Building 10-4 may take Construction Systems 20-4.

APPENDIX D (continued)

Knowledge and Employability **Junior High** Occupational Courses

Areas of Study will:

- allow for delivery of two levels within each **unit of study**:
 - level 1 can be delivered in Grade 8 and level 2 in Grade 9, or
 - both levels can be combined in Grade 8 or Grade 9
- have two to six **units of study** that are between 20–30 hours of instruction per level
- provide schools with the opportunity to design their own junior high school courses by choosing between **units of study** based upon facilities, equipment and student interest.

Knowledge and Employability **Senior High** Occupational Courses

Courses will:

- offer a balance between school-based and work-based learning that provides options for students to enter the workplace or pursue post-secondary education or training
- promote community partnerships that involve the use of speakers, mentors and business sites for work study, job shadow or work experience
- enable schools where up-to-date equipment and technical training is not available to partner with local industries to provide a learning environment reflective of current skills and training.

All courses are 125 hours/5 credits; however, courses may be combined to allow for further instruction or off-campus experience.

- Students are encouraged to explore a variety of courses at the 10-4 level.
- Courses may be combined at the 20-4 and 30-4 levels to increase instructional time and expand curricular content.
- A work experience, Workplace Readiness or Practicum may be incorporated to further apply and develop occupational knowledge and employability skills.

Workplace Readiness 10-4/Workplace Practicum 20-4 and 30-4

- develop employability skills in finding, acquiring and keeping a job
- provide a supportive work experience
- provide a practical environment to enhance employability and occupational skills learned in the occupational course
- placement does not have to relate to the occupation course; however, a 10-4 level occupation course is a prerequisite
- practicum placement must be related to the (prerequisite) occupational course at the 20-4 and 30-4 levels
- 5-credit allocation
- must follow the *Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers* policies
- a Work Experience or Workplace Practicum is needed at the 30-4 level for the Certificate of High School Achievement

Knowledge and Employability Occupational Courses 2006

<p>Certificate of High School Achievement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 credits in 30-level Knowledge and Employability course or 30-level CTS courses <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 credits in a 30-level Work Experience course¹ or 30-level Green Certificate course² <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 credits in a 30-level Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) course³
--

1. Students may enroll in Work Experience 35 without having Work Experience 15 and 25 as prerequisites (includes Workplace Practicum 30-4).

2. Green Certificate courses are offered only at the 30-level for 6 or 5 credits.

3. RAP courses require prerequisites and are in series of 15, 25a, 25b, 25c and 35a; each are 5 credits.

EXAMPLES OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Scenario 1: The total number of students in Grade 8 is 32 and in Grade 9 is 28. Of the totals, six Grade 8 and four Grade 9 students are enrolled in a variety of Knowledge and Employability courses (not necessarily the same courses).

School A

The school has a homeroom organization where students in each grade remain together for all classes except for their complementary courses. School A uses an infusion model in which the teachers address Knowledge and Employability programs of study and other programs of study in the same classroom. The Knowledge and Employability programs of study align with other courses to an appropriate degree to facilitate a variety of whole-class and small-group classroom activities.

A teacher's aid is shared by the two teachers, who have scheduled the aid's assistance to facilitate the combined classroom setting. The aid works with both large and small groups of students.

School B

The school has a homeroom organization where students in each grade remain together for all classes except for their complementary courses and mathematics classes. School B uses a combination of segregated and integrated classroom settings. The teachers of both the integrated and segregated classrooms have scheduled their mathematics classes at the same time. Students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability Mathematics 8 and 9 are 'pulled out' of their classrooms and work with another teacher.

Scenario 2: The total number of students in Grade 8 is 32 and in Grade 9 is 28. Of the totals, 24 Grade 8 and 24 Grade 9 students are enrolled in a variety of Knowledge and Employability courses (not necessarily the same courses).

School C

The school has a homeroom organization where students in each grade remain together for all classes except for their complementary courses. The number of Knowledge and Employability students in School C can warrant a separate classroom for the Knowledge and Employability core subjects. The teacher can combine subjects, e.g., mathematics and science, within the segregated classroom. Students can be integrated for their complementary courses or separated into occupational-specific options.

A teacher's aid is shared by the two teachers, who have scheduled the aid's assistance to facilitate the integrated and segregated classroom settings. The aid works with both large and small groups of students.

EXAMPLES OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULES

Note for following Samples A, B, C, D and E:

- All courses are 5 credits (125 hours of instruction), unless otherwise indicated.
- Shading indicates minimum course requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement.
- Complementary courses may include courses in the following:
 - Knowledge and Employability Occupational Courses (including a safety course)
 - Knowledge and Employability Workplace Practicum
 - Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
 - Fine Arts—Art, Drama or Music
 - Green Certificate Specialization
 - Physical Education 20 and/or 30
 - Registered Apprenticeship Program
 - Second Languages
 - Work Experience.
- Students may enroll in Work Experience 35 or Workplace Practicum 30-4 with one of Workplace Readiness 10-4 or CTR1010 as a prerequisite.

Sample A

School is on a semester system.

Student's goal is to earn a Certificate of High School Achievement in two years of high school.

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		CREDITS
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	
English Language Arts 10-4	Science 10-4	English Language Arts 20-4	English Language Arts 30-4	20
Mathematics 10-4	Social Studies 10-4	Social Studies 20-4	Science 20-4	20
Physical Education 10 (3 credits) + CALM (3 credits)	Complementary Course— Workplace Readiness 10-4	Complementary Course— Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course— Occupational Course 30-4	21
Complementary Course— Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course— Work Experience 15	Mathematics 20-4	Complementary Course— Workplace Practicum 30-4	20
21	20	20	20	81

APPENDIX F (continued)

Sample B

School is on a semester system.

Student's goals include:

- leaving the second semester of year three to start employment or upgrading if necessary for continuing education and training opportunities requirements
- earning a Certificate of High School Achievement in three years of high school.

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		CREDITS
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	
English Language Arts 10-4	Social Studies 10-4	English Language Arts 20-4	Science 20-4	English Language Arts 30-4		25
Mathematics 10-4	Science 10-4	Mathematics 20-4	Social Studies 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 30-4		25
Physical Education 10 (3 credits) + Complementary Course (3 credits)	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 30-4		26
Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	CALM (3 credits) + CTR1010 (1 credit) + CTR1210 (1 credit)	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 20-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 20-4			20
21	20	20	20	15	0	96

Sample C

School is on a semester system.

Student's goals include:

- leaving the second semester of year three to start employment or upgrading if necessary for continuing education and training opportunities requirements
- taking English and Mathematics for the full year for Grade 10 and Grade 11
- earning a Certificate of High School Achievement in three years of high school.

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		CREDITS
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	
English Language Arts 10-4 Mathematics 10-4 Social Studies 10-4	English Language Arts 10-4 Mathematics 10-4 Science 10-4	English Language Arts 20-4 Mathematics 20-4 Social Studies 20-4	English Language Arts 20-4 Mathematics 20-4 Science 20-4	English Language Arts 30-4		25
		Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 30-4		25
Physical Education 10 (5 credits)	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 30-4		25
Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	CALM (3 credits) + CTR1010 + CTR1210 = 5 credits	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 20-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 20-4			20
21	20	20	20	15	0	95

APPENDIX F (continued)

Sample D

School is on a semester system.

Student's goals include:

- taking a combination of Knowledge and Employability and other courses
- transitioning from an initial goal of earning a Certificate of High School Achievement to achieving an Alberta High School Diploma in four years of high school.

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		YEAR 4	CREDITS
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	
Mathematics 10-4	Science 10-4	Mathematics 20-4	Science 20-4	English Language Arts 30-4	English Language Arts 20-2	English Language Arts 30-2	35
Social Studies 10-4	English Language Arts 10-4	English Language Arts 20-4	Social Studies 20-4	Social Studies 23 or 20-2	Mathematics 24	Social Studies 33 or 30-2	35
Complementary Course—Workplace Readiness 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 30-4	Complementary Course—Work Experience 35	Science 24		30
Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Physical Education 10 (3 credits) + Complementary Course (3 credits)	CALM (3 credits) + Complementary Course (3 credits)	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 30-4	Complementary Course—Work Experience 35			27
20	21	21	20	20	15	10	127

Note: Students have completed their requirements for the Certificate of High School Achievement after the first semester of the third year.

Sample E

School is on a semester system.

Student's goals include:

- taking a combination of Knowledge and Employability and other courses
- transitioning from an initial goal of earning a Certificate of High School Achievement goal to achieving an Alberta High School Diploma in three years of high school.

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		CREDITS
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	
Mathematics 10-4	Science 10-4	Mathematics 20-4	Science 20-4	English Language Arts 20-2	English Language Arts 30-2	30
Physical Education 10 (3 credits) + CALM (3 credits)	English Language Arts 10-4	English Language Arts 20-4	Social Studies 20-4	Social Studies 23	Social Studies 33 or 30-2	31
Social Studies 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 20-4	Complementary Course—Occupational Course 30-4	Mathematics 24	Science 24	30
Complementary Course—Occupational Course 10-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Readiness 10-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 20-4	Complementary Course—Workplace Practicum 30-4			20
21	20	20	20	15	15	111

Note: Student has completed his or her requirements for the Certificate of High School Achievement after the first semester of the third year.

Note: Student would need to transfer into English 20-2 from English 20-4.

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS IN KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY COURSES

Students benefit most when their needs and their education plans are appropriately matched. School personnel and parents should consider the following as guidelines when determining the suitability of students for enrollment in one or more Knowledge and Employability courses.

Enrollment of a student in Knowledge and Employability courses must include consultation with, and the informed written consent of, parents/guardians and the student.

GUIDELINES

Learner Achievement Performance and Assessment	<p>Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a history of low achievement, e.g., have a grade level achievement 2–3 years below their peers, in core academic subject areas as evidenced in such records as anecdotal reports, teacher observations and documentation, analysis of student work, rating scales, checklists, earlier Individual Program Plans and achievement test results in grades 3 and 6 • have basic literacy levels, especially in reading, writing and mathematics as documented from standardized testing results, fall well below those of their age peers but not below a Grade 4 level • have a recent individual psychological assessment that indicates a low average I.Q.
The Learning Environment	<p>Students may respond positively to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and guided instruction • learning by doing (concrete, experiential learning opportunities) • instruction that is connected to everyday, work-related problems and/or personal experiences to which the student can relate • individualized reading development strategies to increase the student's level of literacy • frequent and constructive feedback and incremental indications of success • relevant and meaningful connections to the community to enhance the transition from the school to the workplace • guidance in developing personal management, study skills and social and emotional strategies • a safe, caring and nurturing environment with clearly articulated boundaries and limitations.

APPENDIX G (continued)

Students with Special Education Needs	<p>Students with special education needs may register in a Knowledge and Employability course. Students with special education needs will require an Individual Program Plan (IPP) and appropriate classroom accommodations; e.g., extra time, adaptive technology, scribe, teacher assistant support, differentiation of programs of study, modified assignments. Knowledge and Employability courses are normally not appropriate for the student who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• has minimal English or is non-English speaking• has a reading level below Grade 4 and would best be served in a program of differentiated instruction that addresses reading deficiencies• would be served best in a Special Education placement (see Special Education Definitions – Code 51)• has a learning disability and an average or higher I.Q. (see Special Education Definitions – Code 54)• has primary problems that are behavioural/emotional (see Special Education Definitions – Code 42). <p>Special Education Definitions can be found at the following Web site: http://www.education.alberta.ca/media/511466/spedcodingcriteria_2007-2008.pdf.</p> <p>See also <i>Standards for Psycho-educational Assessment</i> (1994) by Special Education Branch available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca.</p>
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BACKGROUND

This background section focuses on what was to help school districts and schools prepare for what is to come in September 2006. The intent is to provide a framework for the development of Knowledge and Employability policy and courses, keeping in mind that the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) and Knowledge and Employability courses were both designed for students with the same specific needs and goals.

This section includes overviews of the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP), the consultation and review process and the change from the IOP to the new Knowledge and Employability courses.

Overview of the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP)

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) was created in the early 1990s for students in grades 8 to 12 who:

- required education experiences that focused on developing reading, writing and mathematics literacy and employability skills in occupational contexts
- expressed a desire to leave school before achieving an Alberta High School Diploma.

The IOP was developed as a five-year program to begin in the eighth year of schooling and continue through the twelfth year of schooling. Students were able to enter and exit the program at any time during grades 8 through 12.

The Integrated Occupational Program included:

- **core courses** – English language arts, grades 8–12; mathematics, grades 8–11; science, grades 8–11; and social studies, grades 8–11
- **occupational courses** – practical arts, grades 8–9 and courses in a variety of occupational clusters in grades 10–12.

Senior high school IOP courses were numbered 16, 26 and 36 (grades 10, 11 and 12 respectively).

Students identified as IOP students entered the program and, with few exceptions, took all of the IOP core courses and a selection of IOP occupational courses. Exceptions included IOP students who were capable of achieving at a higher level. Some districts provided opportunities for these students to take other courses within the IOP classroom; e.g., Mathematics 14 in the Mathematics 16 classroom, CTS courses in a related IOP occupational classroom.

Students who completed 80 credits, including a specified number of credits in IOP core and occupational courses and other courses, earned a Certificate of Achievement.

APPENDIX H (continued)

Grade 9 students in IOP wrote the same provincial achievement tests as other Grade 9 students. Some districts exempted IOP students from writing the achievement tests.

A variety of implementation strategies existed throughout the province including:

- segregated IOP schools within a school authority
- segregated IOP classrooms within a school or school authority
- a combination of segregated and combined classrooms within a school; e.g., IOP occupational and CTS students in the same classroom, Mathematics 14 and Mathematics 16 students in the same classroom.

Why change?

Commencing in 2000, a comprehensive review and consultation process was initiated for IOP. Consultation involved over 800 stakeholders and stakeholder groups, including district and school administrators, teachers and students, representatives from the Francophone community and representatives of parent, business, community, post-secondary and other external groups, as well as Alberta Education individuals and groups.

Consultation participants acknowledged the effectiveness of the program and IOP courses in serving the needs of some students. They recommended that IOP be revised to ensure that students would continue to be well prepared to make successful transitions to other secondary courses—from school to the workplace and from school to continuing education and training opportunities.

For detailed information about the consultation process, refer to the following document.

- *Report on Consultation for Policy Change, Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) Policy 1.4.2, October 2004*
<http://www.education.alberta.ca/departement/policy/k-12manual/section1/occprog.aspx>

Overview of the consultation and review process

Proposed Knowledge and Employability courses policy and draft requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement were distributed and reviewed by external stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Revisions were made to the drafts based on input from participants in the consultation and review process.

Draft Knowledge and Employability programs of study and provincial achievement tests were created and field-tested in schools throughout the province and an online guide to implementation was reviewed by field test teachers. Revisions were made to the drafts based on input from participants in the consultation and review process.

Resources were created and authorized to support implementation of Knowledge and Employability programs of study.

Overview of changes

The consultation and review process resulted in revising policy, requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement and programs of study; identifying and creating new resources and developing new Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Provincial Achievement Tests.

Policy

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) policy was modified to:

- reflect a sequence of courses to meet the needs of individual students by providing flexibility and opportunities for students to take a variety of courses, transition to other courses and take courses at the student's highest level
- change credit/time allocations from 3, 5 or 10 credits to 5 credits to increase alignment with other courses
- provide additional criteria for enrolling students
- change the name from Integrated Occupational Program to Knowledge and Employability courses (for more information, see Appendix A).

Requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement

The requirements for a Certificate of High School Achievement (see Appendix B) were revised to reflect changes in policy including:

- a sequence of courses rather than a program
- the change of credit allocation
- minimum credits at the 20 or 30 levels needed for a Certificate of High School Achievement
- mandating Mathematics 20-4 and Science 20-4 courses for a Certificate of High School Achievement (consultation input indicated that mathematics and science at the 20-4 level are minimum requirements for success in the home, community and workplace and are needed for successful transitioning to Mathematics 24 and Science 24)
- 5 credits in a 30-level work experience or workplace practicum or RAP.

Programs of Study and Resources

Programs of study were revised and new resources created or authorized based on:

- the need to revise programs of study to reflect changes for other courses and/or new courses; e.g., Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses
- the need to update, identify and/or create new resources
- current employment trends and opportunities, continuing education and training and employability skills needed in the workplace
- current research, knowledge and understandings about how students learn; differentiated instruction; teaching strategies and current practices; integrating/segregating students; school-to-continuing education and training opportunities and school-to-work transitions
- new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) outcomes and guidelines

APPENDIX H (continued)

- Alberta Education career development initiatives
- infusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) experiences and perspectives.

Provincial Achievement Tests

Knowledge and Employability Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests were created to reflect the new Knowledge and Employability policy and programs of study.

From program to courses

The following chart provides a brief overview of some of the changes from the Integrated Occupational Program to the new Knowledge and Employability courses.

The Integrated Occupational Program:	Knowledge and Employability courses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy included only an age requirement of 12 years and 6 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy includes the same age requirement as well as specific procedures and criteria for enrolling students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrollment in the program included consultation with parents/guardians, students, teachers and others and annual written consent of parents/guardians (if the student was under 16 years of age) and the student.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrollment in courses continues to include consultation with parents/guardians, students, teachers and others, with an added emphasis on <i>informed</i> annual written consent of parents/guardians (if the student is under 16 years of age) and the student.• Enrollment also includes creating a learning plan for each student through consultation (see Appendix C).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requirements for a Certificate of Achievement included a minimum of 80 credits and specified numbers of credits from IOP core and IOP occupational courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requirements for the Certificate of High School Achievement include a minimum of 80 credits in core and occupational courses (see new requirements in the <i>Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12</i>).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Credit allocations for IOP English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies were 3 credits and therefore not consistent with those of other high school courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Knowledge and Employability courses are 5-credit courses that are consistent with other high school courses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students had limited opportunities to transition to other courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each student has increased opportunities to transition to other courses on a course-by-course basis and has increased opportunities to achieve an Alberta High School Diploma.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests were not based on the IOP programs of study and often resulted in many students writing Provincial Achievement Tests on curriculum they had not taken/completed or the exemption of many Grade 9 students from writing the Provincial Achievement Tests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge and Employability Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests are based on the Knowledge and Employability programs of study. Contact the Learner Assessment Branch for further information.

The Integrated Occupational Program:

- Community partnerships were integral to the program and included job shadowing, mentorship, bringing community members into the classroom/school and/or work experience. Community partnerships were emphasized in the occupational courses.

Knowledge and Employability courses:

- Practical applications that may include community partnerships are included in all Knowledge and Employability courses and promote on- and off-campus experiences that connect the school to everyday home, community and workplace environments.
- The Knowledge and Employability courses continue to provide off-campus activities and will follow the requirements and guidelines in the *Off-campus Education Policy* and the *Off-campus Education Guide for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers*.

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